AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A configurable billing system for a machine, the machine operative to output a product or service and including a plurality of aspect sensors, the sensors operative to detect the delivery of aspects of the product or service and to report the delivery to the billing system, the billing system comprising:

a coded billing strategy including an arbitrarily long list of aspects of interest and an arbitrarily long list of meter descriptions defined for the machine; and

a plurality of meters updated by the billing system for recording the delivery of the aspects of the product or service based on the billing strategy, whereby the billing system tallies the aspects in a ~~predefined~~ manner defined in the billing strategy.

2. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 1 wherein the coded billing strategy further comprises ~~a list~~ information regarding a format in which information regarding the ~~of~~ aspects of interest will be communicated to the billing system by the machine.

3. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 1 wherein each meter in the ~~coded billing strategy comprises a~~ list of meters is described as a function of at least one of the listed aspects of interest.

4. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim ~~3~~ 1 wherein the coded billing strategy comprises information associated with the listed meters, the information describing the function of the meters.

5. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 1 wherein the ~~coded billing strategy comprises information representing a set of functions describing the operation of a set~~ plurality of meters are instantiated in memory, by the billing system, according to the coded billing strategy.

6. (Currently Amended) A configurable billing system for an document processing system, the document processing system operative to produce documents and including a plurality of aspect sensors operative to detect document production events and to report the aspects of the document production to the billing system, the billing system comprising:

a billing strategy description, including an arbitrarily long list of aspects of interest and an arbitrarily long list of meter descriptions, accessible by the billing system;

a plurality of meters defined in the billing strategy; and

a billing module operative to update the plurality of meters according to the billing strategy description.

7. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 6 wherein the billing plurality of meters are instantiated in memory, by the billing module, according to the billing strategy description comprises a list of aspects of interest.

8. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 7 6 wherein the list of aspects of interest comprises an impression count.

9. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 7 6 wherein the list of aspects of interest comprises an impression event flag.

10. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 7 6 wherein the list of aspects of interest comprises a set count.

11. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 7 6 wherein the list of aspects of interest comprises a set completion flag.

12. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 7 6 wherein the list of aspects of interest comprises a diagnostic impression flag.

13. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 7 6 wherein

the list of aspects of interest comprises a media descriptor.

14. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 7̶ 6 wherein the list of aspects of interest comprises a highlight color flag.

15. (Currently Amended) The configurable billing system of claim 7̶ 6 wherein the list of aspects of interest comprises a full color flag.

16. (Currently Amended) A document processing system comprising:

a print engine;

a configurable billing system operative to follow a billing strategy specification including an arbitrarily long list of document production events of interest, an arbitrarily long list of meter descriptions and a machine readable script for updating the meters defined in the list and to record the occurrence of document production events as described in the billing strategy specification; and,

a marker module operative to control the print engine in the production of documents, and to report document production events to the billing system.

17. (Original) The document processing system of claim 16 wherein the marker module is operative to deliver the billing strategy to the billing system.

18. (Original) The document processing system of claim 16 wherein the print engine further comprises a xerographic printer.

19. (Currently Amended) A method for developing and using a universal billing module, the method comprising:

predefining a billing strategy specification, the billing strategy specification including a list of parameters with implicit or explicit communication mechanisms and data parsing information, and process algorithm information in the form of a machine readable script;

storing the billing strategy specification in a machine-readable form;

reading the stored billing strategy specification;

instantiating meter data structures as directed by the read billing

strategy specification;

        monitoring a document processing procedure as directed by the read billing strategy specification; and

        updating the meter data structures as directed by the read billing strategy specification.

20. (Currently Amended) A configurable billing system for a machine, the machine operative to output a product or service and including a plurality of aspect sensors, the sensors being operative to detect the delivery of aspects of the product or service and to report the delivery to the billing system, the billing system comprising:

        ~~a means for loading a custom billing strategy;~~

        a custom billing strategy file including an arbitrarily long list of aspects of interest and an arbitrarily long list of meter descriptions defined for the machine;

        a means for loading the custom billing strategy file; and,

        a plurality of meters instantiated by the billing system for recording the delivery of the aspects of the product or service based on the billing strategy whereby the billing system tallies the aspects in a predefined manner.

21. (Currently Amended) A configurable billing system for a document processing system, the document processing system operative to produce documents and including one or more aspect sensor operative to detect document production events and to report the document production events to the billing system, the billing system comprising:

        a coded billing strategy description accessible by the billing system, including a machine-readable script~~defining meters as mathematical functions of information received from the one or more aspect sensors~~;

        a plurality of meters defined in the ~~billing strategy~~machine-readable script as mathematical functions of information received from one or more aspect sensors; and

        a billing module operative to update the plurality of meters according to the functions ~~defined in the billing strategy~~implemented by the machine-readable script.

22. (Currently Amended) A document processing system comprising:

a print engine;

a configurable billing system operative to <u>run a machine-readable script</u> ~~receive~~ <u>received in</u> a billing strategy <u>file, the machine-readable script being operative to, at least one of, instantiate and update a set of meters for recording</u> ~~and to record~~ the occurrence of document production ~~events described in the billing strategy~~; and,

a marker module operative to control the print engine in the production of documents, and to report document production events to the billing system.

23. (Currently Amended) A document processor operative to produce printed documents, the document processor comprising:

a print engine;

at least one aspect sensor operative to sense and report at least one of an impression count, an impression event, a set count, ~~a set completion event~~, a diagnostic impression event, a media description, a use of highlight color and a use of full color related to a production of a document;

a billing strategy file defining a billing strategy in machine readable form, the billing strategy <u>file</u> describing <u>an arbitrarily large number of</u> mathematical ~~function~~ <u>functions</u> of <u>an arbitrarily large number of</u> ~~at least one meter~~ <u>meters</u> for processing and recording information reported by the at least one aspect sensor;

a billing module operative to receive the billing strategy file and instantiate the ~~at least one meter~~ <u>arbitrarily large number of meters</u> according to the billing strategy; and

a marker module operative to control the print engine in the production of the document.